THE BIBLE SPEAKS

International Uniform Sunday School Lessons

BY DR. KENNETH J. FOREMAN

Scripture: Job 1-2; 19-23.
Devotional Reading: Romans 8:33-39.

Man's Eternal 'Why'

Lesson for October 3, 1954

DURING the next three months the Sunday school lessons in the "uniform" series dealt with in this column, are drawn from the wisdom and the worship of the ancient Hebrews, as found in those four not too well known books, Job, Proverbs, Psalms and Ecclesiastes. Parts of all but the first of these are known by heart everywhere; but much of them is unfamiliar ter- ritory. It would be a good idea during these three months to read these four books from start to finish. An average of two and a half chapters a day would do it. Why not?

Dr. Foreman

More Questions Than Answers

It is a sort of well-worn saying of preachers that the Bible has the answers to life's questions. But there is one book in the Bible that has more questions than answers: the book of Job. It is one of the greatest books in the world, and it will always appeal to men everywhere, because it puts in a powerful way the very questions that the best people ask. Job himself was one of these "best people." He is called "blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil." God even speaks of him with some pride. But Job did not have all the answers, though he had most of the questions. His best friends thought, and no doubt he himself used to think, that suffering is always a sign that God is punishing the sufferer. This idea is still a common one. But Job felt there must be something wrong with it, for he fell a victim to disasters he would not have wished on his worst enemy. He lost his fortune (which was in cattle), his workmen, and his family, all within a few days, and finally he lost his health.

His friends thought they understood this. Suffering, they thought, was a sure sign of sin, so Job must have been a great sinner, in his intentions at least. But Job knew better. He knew he had not been a great sinner. So he raised the great "WHY?" that men before him and after him have raised. Why does God let good people suffer?

"But There Is No Justice"

It is not the mere painfulness of the world that weighs on us. It is the apparent unfairness of things. Pain and affliction that is "coming to" people does not bother our minds much, not even when it hits us ourselves. If you have a toothache and you know it is because you have indulged in too much candy and soft foods, you may cry about the toothache but you know, all the same, that you have nothing to cry about. You had it coming. If a cruel and murderous kidnapper dies in the gas chamber you do not feel greatly upset about it. You may even feel that no legal punishment can hurt him as much as he has hurt others. But if a good friend of yours dies of cancer, you do feel keen distress, because you cannot believe that your friend has earned such pain. And if you lift your eyes and look out over the world, especially if you know something about history, you will see so much frustration of the good, so much prospering of evil, down through the centuries, that you wonder sometimes how men can believe there is a God.

"I Seek . . . But I Cannot See"

If the woes of the world give us slight concern, selfish as we are by nature, we do wake up when trouble walks through our own doors. There must have been a good many people in trouble whom Job had known, but it took his own calamities to jolt him awake. We gather from his friends' remarks that he could speak cheerfully to those in distress, but when he was in trouble, he sang a sadder tune. Just when he needed most to talk with God, God did not seem to be anywhere near. The world is a puzzle to every man, but the good man, the believer in God, can sometimes be more puzzled by it than any one else. Because the believer feels that the world ought not to be like this, he is all the more distressed by what he sees. The better he is, the more he believes in God, the more distressed he is. It was Job who asked the terrible questions, not his weakly pious friends. Yet —Job did not "fold his hands and acquiesce."

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VIRGINIA APPLE GROWERS HAVE SEVERAL ADVANTAGES OVE COMPETITORS

Virginia apple growers have several advantages over their western competitors, says Peter Henderson, associate agricultural economist at VPI Agricultural Experiment Station.

First, he lists grade specifications. Washington State has changed from the extra fancy-fancy combination grade to straight grades this year. In the change, the specifications for quality and color requirements were lowered considerably for individual grades. Meanwhile Virginia grades and inspection are being improved.

Comparable Virginia varieties mature about three weeks earlier than in the West.. This is an advantage in maintaining consumer acceptance.

Virginia apples have less wax on the skin than western apples. As a result red varieties are much brighter in appearance. They do not collect as much dust while on display, and bruises do not show as badly.

Virginia apples have a longer growing season, which adds to the flavor and coloring.

Another advantage is that the average delivered price of Virginia apples is cheaper in the east and central states. This may be due to two things—nearness to market and less shipping cost; and absence of a centralized sales organization. Buyers Ridge — Arlington for Lee Cold Proof; and Forkedeer for north of James River only. West of the Blue Ridge — Arlington for Lee Cold Proof; and Forkedeer for north of James River only. West of the Blue Ridge — Arlington, Atlantic, and